

A N  
E S S A Y  
ON THE  
SOUL of MAN.

---

*Est Modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines;  
Quos ultra, citraque, nequit consistere Rectum.*

---



---

L O N D O N,

Printed; and Sold by JACOB ROBINSON, at the *Golden-Lion* in *Ludgate-Street*. M.DCC.XLIV.

(Price One Shilling.)



E S S A Y

ON THE

S O U L of M A N

I have been thinking much lately of the soul  
and how it is affected by the body.

L O N D O N

Printed and Sold by J. Johnson at the Golden-  
Age in Pall Mall.



(Price One Shilling)





# THE PROLOGUE.



*HIS Work is meant for the discerning Few;  
For those who Truth, thro' Reason's Optics, view;  
For those who Custom's Privilege disown,  
When too fallacious, and imperious grown:  
But Some all good Intentions will traduce,  
And wou'd of Things pervert the proper Use.  
Flow'rs to the Bee ambrosial Sweets dispense,  
The Spider takes destructive Poison thence;  
What yields innoxious Creatures, wholesome Food,  
With rankest Venom stores the Viper's Brood:  
Those, who this Work impartially peruse,  
And wou'd be willingly inform'd, I chuse;  
To whom all right Construction is unknown,  
Those I refuse, the Mischief be their own.*

*Truth is my noblest, my sincerest Aim,  
In this I centre all my Hopes of Fame.*



## The PROLOGUE.

*Little, or much, where is the Man but strays,  
In Life's uncertain, or erroneous Maze?  
Insidious Falshood I wou'd bring to Light,  
And fairly prove, and vindicate the Right:  
My Mind's a Bow, that's resolutely bent,  
Arrows shall thence incessantly be sent;  
And, tho' the Ways of Human-kind are dark,  
I'll shoot all round Me——— but I'll hit the Mark.*



A N

*In this I centre all my Hopes of Fame.  
Truth is my noblest, my sincerest Aim.*





A N  
E S S A Y  
O N T H E  
S O U L of M A N.



GENIUS of Verse! with Ardour fill my Breast,  
And grant, with Favour, this my last Request;  
To pierce the deep Recesses of the Mind,  
And Truth, and Error, with Distinction, find;  
T'untwist the Thread; that's mystically spun,  
Or thro' the Winding-Labrynth backward run;  
T'unravel the Perplexity, where join  
Those of pernicious, and of no Design:  
Thus, while my searching Mind prepares to fly,  
And all th' Extent of Art and Nature try;  
To me, oh Muse! benevolently bring,  
An Eagle's Boldness! and an Eagle's Wing!

B

To



To pass the Region of romantic Dreams,  
And rove where Reason spreads its golden Beams.

False are the Paths the Credulous have trod;  
The Law of Nature is the Will of GOD,  
Fixt and eternal! This well understood,  
And practis'd truly, makes us Wise and Good:  
Let Man then follow Nature's purest Light;  
'Tis Reason which alone directs us right:  
Its Guidance in surrounding Ills defends,  
And in Success, or Satisfaction, ends.  
Let us endeavour to be Just and Wise,  
Justice and Wisdom, Happiness comprise,  
Whatever Fools believe, or Knaves devise.  
Not Error, but well-guided Knowledge, brings  
Support to Justice, Wisdom never springs  
From Imposition, but the Truth of Things.  
Led by Devices, variously inclin'd,  
We wander, to no certain Point confin'd;  
What well directs, must well convince the Mind!

Belief's the Mind's involuntary Act;  
What we believe, we must imagine Fact;

Must



Must think it so, nay, e'er Belief's procur'd,  
 We shou'd be strongly in our Mind assur'd:  
 What we suspect erroneous, or unjust,  
 How can the Mind unalterably trust?

The Soul, altho' in Human-kind the same,  
 Yet various seems, in ev'ry various Frame;  
 The Model of the Fabric, where it dwells;  
 'Tis wrong, or right; it fails, or it excells;  
 It never can its Faculties display,  
 But, as that yields it a commodious Way.  
 Was not the Soul thus orderly confin'd,  
 Alike in all wou'd seem the Pow'r of Mind;  
 Of Genius wou'd be no Distinction then,  
 Betwixt the Fool, and Wife; the Babes, and Men;  
 The Soul wou'd then with equal Lustre shine,  
 In all, in all wou'd seem alike Divine;  
 Yet, often is the Soul's informing Might,  
 By Sicknefs dampt, or conquer'd by a Fright;  
 By Study weaken'd; and its active Fire,  
 Thro' chilling Age, must grad'ally expire;  
 The Cause unknown, the Mad-man droops, or raves;  
 Some are incorrigible Fools, or Knaves;



When th'Organs are not well dispos'd, or clear,  
 The Hypochondriac sinks in Doubt or Fear;  
 Nor NEWTON had, industriously profound,  
 With so much Justness trac'd th'Ætherial round,  
 Had the less curious Texture of his Brain,  
 Been such, to render his Enquiries vain;  
 Nor so, cou'd uninstructed Toil impart,  
 To S——n the Sublimity of Art;  
 Tho', notwithstanding his prolific Brain,  
 Some Dreggs of Unrefin'dness still remain;  
 Earthy and low — he seems now less inclin'd,  
 To Love of Art — to narrow Views confin'd;  
 Sublimity of Sense and Soul must meet,  
 To render truest Excellence compleat;  
 And, to maintain its Lustre to the Height,  
 Good Manners and Discretion must unite.

Dullness sometimes in Height of Sense intrudes,  
 And greatest Wits have their Vicisitudes;  
 See, thro' long Toil, his Mind's high Vigour drain'd,  
 MILTON is lost in *Paradise regain'd*;  
 Poor OTWAY sunk in Reputation's Pride;  
 O'erwelmd with Spleen, facetious BUTLER dy'd;

The



The Fame, that manly *Wycherley*, by Plays  
 Obtain'd, was foil'd by miscellaneous Lays;  
 And drudging *Settle* (at the last than whom  
 None more deprav'd) had Credit in his Bloom.

Inspiring Pow'rs! what Method can we take,  
 To keep the Soul incessantly awake?  
 The Soul, confin'd to this material Clay,  
 Is subject thus to Failings, and Decay.  
 Over the Mind Contingencies preside,  
 It has its Ebbs, and Flowings, as the Tide;  
 Ill Accidents, Misusage, and Neglect,  
 Often its noblest Faculties infect;  
 As Yawning go's by Sympathy, about,  
 And the first Yawn is answer'd by the Rout;  
 So (such is our mechanic Frame) the Mind  
 Is mov'd, and secret Causes rule Mankind;  
 For, Opposition, and oppressive Woe,  
 Render the most exalted Spirits low;  
 Ev'n I, myself, while Wants and Cares controul,  
 Now feel a vast Deficiency of Soul;  
 Thro' num'rous Crosses, harra'st and oppress'd,  
 Sunk is the daring Ardour of my Breast;

C

And



And tho' Experience has improv'd my Mind,  
 In Science, yet 'tis seemingly declin'd;  
 My Soul Disgust and Opposition damp,  
 Tho' here I blaze like an expiring Lamp;  
 There conclude my once ambitious Aim,  
 My Love of Poetry, and Hopes of Fame.

Ye Learn'd, inform me, whence a Thing so dire  
 Proceeds? What is th' Original of Fire?  
 Of what are its destructive Seeds compos'd?  
 How lurk they in obdurate Flints enclos'd?  
 By fit Employment 'till its Pow'r is shown,  
 'Tis wholly, like unbody'd Souls, unknown;  
 Cherish'd by Air, with proper Fuel fed,  
 It rises, and erects its spiry Head;  
 It must, depriv'd of Nutriment, expire;  
 To its strange unknown Somewhere must retire.

Organs the Soul's Supremacy relate,  
 And are its only Ministers of State;  
 By these its Will and Dignity are known,  
 And all its wondrous Qualities alone;  
 As Notions only are by Words convey'd,  
 As Conquests are by Men and Arms display'd;

As



As Air that's breath'd into the warbling Flute,  
 Before, and after, in the Void, is mute;  
 The Soul, whate'er it is, thus holds no more  
 Its Sense or Vigour, when its Helps are o'er.  
 Must not the Soul insensibly repose,  
 When nothing can its Faculties disclose?  
 When useless once enliven'd Matter lies,  
 Whence all its active Operations rise?

Nature and Art thus mut'ally combine,  
 To prompt the Poet's marvellous Design;  
 From Chaos (indigested Word and Thought)  
 Digested, and to Regulation brought;  
 By these two Pow'rs, in strict Alliance join'd,  
 A beauteous New-created World we find;  
 Either devoid of th' others useful Aid,  
 Useless, or wild, or impotent, is made.

Matter is of itself (as some have taught)  
 Unactive, and insensible of Ought;  
 On a superior Being must depend,  
 Nor its own Motion can begin, or end:  
 Tho' this is question'd; for, we may surmise,  
 From Matter, Sensibility can 'rise;



(And be reveal'd in ev'ry vital Frame,  
 While just CEconomy informs the same)  
 If Matter needs this Help in all things, then  
 Creatures of ev'ry Sort, have Souls like Men;  
 Either is dubious, and must be conceal'd,  
 Till all the Laws of Matter are reveal'd:  
 Let us suppose superior Pow'r to join  
 With Matter, Immaterial and Divine;  
 That 'tis eternal, and Account must make  
 For every Transgression, or Mistake;  
 Have equal Share of future Ill, or Good,  
 For Things well known, and Things not understood;  
 Yet Monarchs Wills, and Laws of ev'ry Land,  
 Are such, as all concern'd, can understand;  
 If ev'ry thing is obvious, full, and clear,  
 What Room for Error, or Delusion here?  
 Such ought to be, and is Heaven's real Will;  
 For, how should they, who know it not, fulfil?  
 Shou'd not the Will of Heaven be rightly known?  
 (Clearly and indisputably its own)  
 Instant, or future Recompences, all  
 Within the Compass of our Knowledge fall?  
 For— suits it well, with Wisdom's Rules to screen  
 What cannot be significant unseen?

Wou'd



Wou'd Heaven its Pow'r and Purposes reveal,  
But thus — from which we cannot here appeal,  
Who, monst'rous Disobedience to declare?  
But worst of Fools, or Madmen, then wou'd dare?

Religions wou'd be ev'ry-where the same,  
If from high Heav'n their Institutions came;  
'Tis more than Guess, who did their Frames compose;  
Their Diff'rence, or mysterious Darkness, shows  
They ne'er from perfect Truth and Wisdom rose:  
However, still imagining we knew  
The Will of Heav'n complete, unfeign'dly true,  
And that the Soul must Recompense expect,  
As suiting its Performance, or Neglect;  
Suppose the Soul, when from the Body freed,  
To Joy, or Pain, cou'd instantly proceed;  
Susceptible of each, to what Intent  
Is unavailing Bliss, or Punishment?  
All Punishments, and all Rewards, intend  
(Their real Nature, or their genuine End)  
The Parties meant t'encourage, or affright,  
And set, by their Examples, others right;  
Fruitless, or cruel, else is Woe or Pain,  
And Bliss is else but ill-bestow'd, or vain!



To the Discerning, evidently clear,  
 These Things cannot too manifest appear;  
 In Life they may our publick Notice share,  
 But cannot after, not known when! or where!

The *Hebrews*, were, 'tis readily confest,  
 Once less religious Blunderers than the rest;  
 They never thought *Jehovah* cou'd intend  
 To scourge his People, but with Aim to mend;  
 So warn'd, their Courses *Jewish* Monarchs steer'd,  
 And some became neglected, or rever'd;  
 Suited to their Behaviour, was their State,  
 Wretched the Bad! the Good were fortunate!  
 They nothing had t'expect, to hope, or fear,  
 Hereafter; for, their whole Awards were here;  
 They needed not t'entice them, or compel;  
 Nor heard of th' open'd Gates of Heav'n, or Hell;  
 Heaven's Wrath, or Grace, flow'd in an instant Stream,  
 Nor cou'd they find another World in Dream,  
 'Till near the Time their abdicated Race,  
 Cou'd find in this, no fixt abiding Place.

They, who suppos'd departed Souls to range  
 From Form to Form, in a continual Change,

But



But ill suppos'd those various Changes sent,  
 Either as a Reward, or Punishment;  
 For if new Forms excluded Souls explore,  
 They loose the Sense of what they were before;  
 Nor, what they were, is to themselves alone,  
 But to all others, equally unknown.

'Tis most absurd, to think that Souls appear,  
 And haunt their former Habitations here;  
 For (not to question how they cou'd presume  
 To slip the While from their appointed Doom)  
 Some Parts of Matter are (as all agree)  
 Too rare, for most discerning Eyes to see:  
 Can then what's Immaterial, be suppos'd  
 To Man's Decernment possibly disclos'd?

Or can the wand'ring Soul, with wond'rous Art,  
 New Matter take, enliven ev'ry Part,  
 And give it Sense and Motion? Can a Flood  
 Be there infus'd of circulating Blood?  
 Whence only Sense and Motion can proceed!  
 Or, if the Soul can do this wond'rous Deed  
 At Home, why cou'd it not preserve its Stay,  
 In spite of Age, of Sicknefs, or Decay?



Why wou'd the Learn'd and Eloquent of Old,  
 Occultest Things pretendingly unfold,  
 Without sure Information? Why reveal  
 What Fate and Nature ever will conceal?  
 What is the Soul? Say, can the searching Mind,  
 By Observation, by Reflection find?  
 Much less, its undeterminable State,  
 When from its fleshly Dwelling separate!

Yet how, or where, Futurity's employ'd,  
 If Pain is felt, or Blessings are enjoy'd,  
 To Us is equal, as already shown;  
 It is, and must be totally unknown;  
 But those fair Means, by which Repute is gain'd,  
 (First won, and then eternally maintain'd)  
 Create a better Regulation here,  
 By far, than either future Hope or Fear;  
 Nor Life's Affairs perverted can we find,  
 Where Justice is not lame, or Reason blind:  
 Reason and Justice, mixt with fair Repute,  
 Distinguish Man from Man, and Man from Brute.  
 The fair Repute! none shou'd presume to raise  
 On wrong Foundation; seek thro' crooked Ways;  
 With fixt Aversion, fly the False and Vain,  
 And let thy Wreath Desert and Reason gain.

But



But true heroic Virtue is retir'd,  
 And all unbias'd Sentiments expir'd,  
 Or nearly lost! where narrow Priestcraft reigns,  
 Selfishness (which the gen'rous Mind disdains)  
 Is cherisht most — as Guns o'er-charg'd rebound,  
 Or bursting fiercely throw Destruction round.  
 Religion, thus o'er-charg'd with pious Will,  
 Recoils, or bursts t' Extravagance of Ill:  
 Hence Pride and Malice their Afflictions deal,  
 And ev'ry Mischief breaks from fiery Zeal.

Explore the Globe, far as the Billows roul;  
 Search-East, or West, or near the freezing Pole,  
 Where solar Rays at Distance faintly shine,  
 Or dart their scorching Ardour from the Line;  
 Examine all the various World with Care,  
 Try Human-kind; and then inform me, where;  
 Where most is Breach of Faith, or treach'rous Art,  
 Or foulest Deed? 'Tis in the Christian Part.  
 Where? But where pious Actions are enjoyn'd  
 The most, Religion is the most refin'd!  
 Fierce Zeal Things unperformable exacts,  
 Against the Nature of Religion acts;  
 Against its Nature and Intention — why?  
 Instruction's Springs, by much, are strain'd too high!



For real Good, we may mistake what seems;  
 Virtue and Knowledge are not in Extreame:  
 We shou'd all Ease, all Happiness forego,  
 If ev'ry Thing we cou'd completely know;  
 But Nature, quite abhorring what confounds,  
 Has giv'n our Faculties their proper Bounds.  
 Against all Innovation, or Pretence,  
 Let simple Nature, or let common Sense }  
 Stand, as a sure Direction, or Defence:  
 Whate'er Inventions artful Men provide,  
 The dubious Mind pretendingly to guide;  
 From those Inventions heedless Men will fall,  
 Or make them serve, their Inclinations Call.  
 Passion and Interest will controul the Throng,  
 Where false Distinction's made of Right and Wrong;  
 Of false Distinction made, the greatest Cause,  
 Is false Instruction, thwarting Nature's Laws;  
 But where the Mind is not perverted quite,  
 By Imposition robb'd of Nature's Light;  
 All Men of Right and Wrong the Notions boast,  
 And most esteem those who regard them most;  
 The wiser Sort this by Experience find,  
 And too far Prospects but perplex the Mind.

For



For, if the Soul, by a superior Aid,  
 Is præ-existently bestow'd, or made  
 Immediate with the Body, is not clear,  
 Nor ever did convincingly appear;  
 Or if the subtlest Parts of Matter give  
 Alone — those Means, by which we move and live;  
 If subtlest Parts of working Matter can,  
 Spontaneous only, animate the Man,  
 Is dubious too, must ever be conceal'd,  
 'Till Nature is more perfectly reveal'd,

Who of the Soul can absolutely tell  
 The Nature? or unfold this Miracle,  
 Whence it proceeded? whether 'tis design'd  
 To rove, from its corporeal Friend disjoyn'd?  
 All Information, and Reflection here  
 Must like a Flash, or Vapour disappear;  
 'Tis quite mysterious, and Relations given  
 From Earth, and ev'n pretendedly from Heaven,  
 Are inconsistent and absurd, dispenſe  
 Notions which thwart the Rules of Common-sense.

Oh, thou! suppos'd Immortal and Divine!  
 Whom we can but by Negatives define,



What art thou? who miraculously knows?  
 What not, our Reason evidently shews;  
 Not surely what Philosophers of Old,  
 On modern Priests have ignorantly told;  
 Or what Mankind by vain Tradition hold;  
 Unskilful in the Laws of Nature, Men  
 Describe thee wrongly; and, oh! rightly, when  
 Shall we our Doubts and Difficulties clear  
 Concerning Thee? We cannot know thee here;  
 From all our vital Functions when releas'd,  
 Is not our Faculty of Knowing ceas'd?

And yet, ambitious Men pretend to show,  
 What none can possibly have Means to know;  
 Stiling, to strengthen the perverse Design,  
 Their Guesses or Devices, Truths divine;  
 Nor, of sufficient Qualities possess,  
 Audaciously wou'd Lord it o'er the Rest:  
 Nature herself has proper Rules assign'd,  
 To regulate the Sorts of Human-kind;  
 The Power and Will of arbitrary Knaves  
 Was ne'er intended, but for abject Slaves;  
 The Bold and Wise (unconquerably nice)  
 Can never yeild to follow known Device;

Device



Device unknown (like wand'ring Fires at Night)  
 By wond'rous Chance leads the Deluded right;  
 As ev'ry Thing, we from its Center force,  
 Now this, now that Way bends its restless Course;  
 He who the Light of Reason wou'd repel,  
 Against Experience he who dares rebell,  
 Was never yet, nor can be, govern'd well.

Thus have I manifestly shewn the Cause  
 Why Man by Reason, or by Nature's Laws,  
 Is only rightly guided — other Rules,  
 Impos'd by Knaves, convert us into Fools;  
 That Reputation (when with Virtue joyn'd)  
 More than Religion, regulates the Mind:  
 Must Man than be (while Knaves or Madmen rule)  
 Scar'd like a Child, or bubbled like a Fool?  
 What then can be th' Advantage Reason brings,  
 If we must yield to such prepost'rous Things?  
 What can be more inhuman than Deceit?  
 What more abhor'd by Nature than a Cheat?  
 But when Deceit, and Impudence, and Lyes,  
 Of venerable Truth usurp the Prize;  
 Assume her Garb, and wou'd her Essence seem,  
 And boast Commission from the Pow'r supream;



Fledge Hope, and prune Imagination's Wings,  
 With soothing Promise of the rarest Things;  
 All are deceiv'd, but they who better know;  
 Most are inveigled by Pretence and Show;  
 The silly Child, in Covert of the Brake,  
 Exulting thus beholds the spangled Snake;  
 And covets it in Innocence of Play;  
 Nor fears a Mischief from a Thing so gay!

Cou'd we but follow Nature's purest Light,  
 Be led by Reason, all Things wou'd go right;  
 But sunk in Error by the cloudy Throng,  
 All is perverted, all Things will go wrong;  
 Integrity and Justice meet Disdain,  
 And gloomy Chaos re-assumes his Reign;  
 Fraud, Falshood, and Dissimulation rule;  
 And the World's shar'd betwixt the Knave and Fool.

Oh! why is Man to a prepost'rous Lot,  
 By Fate ordain'd? by Fate ordain'd he's not;  
 Fate's Ordination never is amiss,  
 Well-ruling Fate, has no Concern in this;  
 'Tis owning all to Man's assuming Pride,  
 Uncurb'd — who thus his Fellows aims to guide;

And



And gracious Truth clandestinely disguise,  
With Nonsense, and Impossibilities!

Truth, like completest Beauty, when undrest,  
Is amiable, and naked pleases best;  
Simplicity or Plainness is her Choice;  
And, well-descern'd, she gains the gen'ral Voice  
Of Human-kind — for, Noble is her End;  
The fairest Mistress! and sincerest Friend!  
Why then wou'd some mysteriously advance;  
And lead Mankind a mazy Morris-Dance?  
When gracious Truth dos'ever near Us stand,  
And kindly offers her conducting Hand;  
Truth, by the Light of Nature partly shown,  
And by Experience made more fully known!

What mighty Things has Réputation done?  
What num'rous Acts (illustrious as the Sun)  
Produc'd? — with her, Honour and Truth remain,  
And all exalted Virtues form her Train;  
By Love of Fame, and good Examples fir'd,  
Men think and act, as if indeed inspir'd;  
But what Importance is in Notions found?  
Meer Notions! all uncertain, or unsound!



The Well-descerning good Examples rule;  
But false Devices falsly lead the Fool.

My Thoughts I have reveal'd with Freedom,  
Nor fiery Hate, or Persecution fear;  
I fiery Hate and Persecution flight,  
While I maintain Reason's undoubted Right;  
Tortures and Death let th' Inquisition deal,  
By Furies urg'd, blind Faith, and frantick Zeal;  
All Thanks to Heaven's auspicious Inf'lence — We  
Are from tyrannic Impositions free;  
Tyrannic Impositions we disdain,  
Reason and Liberty in **BRITAIN** reign!

**F I N I S.**





